THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMECE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) to (c) Investment by NRIs, like other forms of Foreign Direct Investment, is determined by a number of factors, both internal and external. Besides the commercial decisions of the investor, global economic environment, corporate strategy of the transnational corporations and investors and domestic economic environment also play a major role. The NRI investments including those under Schemes of RBI has been US $ 2684.51 million from August 1991 till September 2003.

ITPO's incentive scheme for employees

2025. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India Trade Promotion Organisation has introduced an incentive scheme for its employees in September, 1996;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the scheme was approved by Government;

(d) if not, how much irregular payment has been made till October, 2003;

(e) whether DPE guidelines issued in March, 1996 never authorised Public Sector Enterprises to introduce such a scheme; and

(f) if so, the corrective steps taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The incentive scheme had been formulated keeping in view the instructions issued by the Department of Public Enterprises.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Payments have been made to the employees not as an 'incentive' under the scheme but only as an 'advance' every year with the approval of the Board of Directors of ITPO on the condition that if the incentive scheme is not finally approved by the Government, the employees will have to refund the same.

(e) DPE's guidelines issued in March 1996, *inter-alia* clarify that ex-gratia/honorarium would not be paid over and above entitlement under the provision of Bonus Act or the Executive instructions issued by the DPE in respect of *ex-gratia* unless the amount is authorised under the duly approved incentive scheme.

(f) Does not arise.

Countervailing duties on subsidised agro-imports

2026. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry is seriously thinking of imposing countervailing duties on subsidised agro-imports from US and EU; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) India has so far not applied countervailing duty on agro-imports from any Member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), including the US and the EU, for the purpose of offsetting subsidy on such imported products. Government will take action to apply countervailing duty on subsidized imported products in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement on Agriculture and the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures of the WTO either based on receipt of a duly substantiated petition from the domestic industry seeking,initiation of an investigation leading to such action or based on sufficient evidence of existence of a subsidy, injury and causal link to justify initiation of an investigation.

Infrastructure for intellectual property framework

2027. SHRI S.P.M. SYED KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the measures being taken by Government to strengthen the infrastructure for a better Intellectual Property framework in the country; and

(b) whether any expert group has been formed for the above purpose?